



John L. Salomone  
Town Manager

# TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET  
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

**MAYOR JEFF WRIGHT**

## MINUTES

### NEWINGTON TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

**January 22, 2008**

Mayor Wright called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM in the Helen Nelson Room of the Newington Town Hall.

#### **I PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

#### **II ROLL CALL**

Councilors Present:

Councilor Banach  
Councilor Boni  
Councilor Bottalico  
Councilor Bowen  
Councilor Cohen  
Councilor Lenares  
Councilor Nagel  
Councilor Nasinnyk  
Mayor Wright

Staff Present:

John L. Salomone, Town Manager  
Lori Verreault, Executive Assistant  
Ann Harter, Finance Director  
Anthony Ferraro, Town Engineer

#### **III AWARDS/PROCLAMATIONS**

##### **A Sgt. Jay LoStocco – Retirement**

Mayor Wright turned the microphone over to Deputy Mayor Lenares, a friend of Sgt. LoStocco. Deputy Mayor Lenares read the following proclamation:

**WHEREAS, James LoStocco was hired as a Newington Police Officer on September 28, 1987 and graduated from the Municipal Police Academy on December 7, 1987; and**

**WHEREAS, during his career with the Newington Police Department Jay LoStocco served as Field Training Officer, Detective, and as a member of the Emergency Response Team and was appointed Sergeant on February 8, 1998; and**

**WHEREAS, Jay served as Field Training Officer Coordinator, K-9 Sergeant, Administrative Sergeant, Detective Sergeant and Patrol Sergeant prior to being transferred to Support Services; and**

**WHEREAS, Sgt. LoStocco has served the Town of Newington and its residents in emergencies, times of stress and under sometimes difficult conditions in a most respectful and professional manner and has received a number of letters of recognition and commendations from the Newington Police Department as well as letters of appreciation from the public, other police departments, and local businesses; and**

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**WHEREAS, Jay LoStocco has submitted his letter of resignation effective February 15, 2008; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Newington Town Council hereby extends its appreciation to Sergeant James LoStocco for his 20 years of service to the residents of the Town of Newington, congratulates him on his retirement, and wishes him much success in his future endeavors.**

Deputy Mayor Lenares commented that Sgt. LoStocco has been a friend of his family for many years and gave his thanks and appreciation to Sgt. LoStocco on behalf of himself and the Town Council for Sgt. LoStocco's twenty years of service.

Mayor Wright thanked Sgt. LoStocco for his hard work and commented that Sgt. LoStocco has done a fabulous job as an ambassador to the Town over the past twenty years.

Sgt. LoStocco remarked that it has been a privilege and honor to serve the Town for the past twenty years. He thanked the Lenares family for their hospitality. He noted that he has worked with some of the State's finest law enforcement officers while in Newington, and has had some great mentors. He also thanked his family: wife Lori and daughters Nicole and Madeline.

The Councilors thanked and congratulated Sgt. LoStocco. Councilor Bottalico stated that he has known Sgt. LoStocco for a couple of years and knows that the NPD will miss him. Councilor Boni commented that he met Sgt. LoStocco while he was in his first year on the force. He commented that Sgt. LoStocco is a fine officer and a gentleman who will be missed. Councilor Nasinnyk remarked that she met Sgt. LoStocco a couple of years ago and appreciated his help. She noted that having a police officer in her own family she knows that it will be very nice for his wife and daughters to have him back.

Public comment – none

Motion seconded by Councilor Nasinnyk. Motion passed 9-0.

**B Chair Presentation – Former Council Members**

Mayor Wright invited forward former Mayor Mortensen, former Councilor Hedberg and former Deputy Mayor Hall to come forward for the presentation. Former Councilors Klett and Sones were unable to attend the presentation.

Mayor Wright moved the following:

**WHEREAS, the members of the 2005-2007 Newington Town Council voluntarily provided service to the Town and did so professionally and proudly; and**

**WHEREAS, these community leaders placed the interests of the Town above their personal lives, sacrificing major events in the daily activities of their spouses, children and parents to attend numerous Town Council, Board, Commission and other public meetings and gatherings; and**

**WHEREAS, these dedicated public servants diligently performed their role, knowing that the future of our Town was affected by their actions; and**

**WHEREAS, former Town Council members Rodney B. Mortensen (Mayor 2005-2007), Cathleen B. Hall (1997-2007), Maureen H. Klett (2006-2007), Sheldon S. Sones (2005-2007) and Jeffrey L. Hedberg (2005-2007) are to be recognized for their years of loyal service; and**

**WHEREAS, over the years an official Town of Newington chair has been presented to former Councilors in recognition of their work and to serve as a symbol of the Town's gratitude;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

**That the Newington Town Council, on behalf of the residents of the Town of Newington, hereby presents an honorary chair to Rodney B. Mortensen, Cathleen B. Hall, Maureen H. Klett, Sheldon S. Sones and Jeffrey L. Hedberg and extends sincere appreciation to them for a "job well done."**

Mayor Wright thanked former Mayor Mortensen and promised to try to carry on his legacy to do what is right for the Town. He thanked former Councilor Hedberg and expressed his appreciation for his dedication and service, noting the extra effort required as a result of being in the minority party. Mayor Wright thanked former Deputy Mayor Hall for all her years of service and all she has done for the Town. He remarked that

he hopes that all three will return to public office in the future. Mayor Wright also expressed his sincere thanks and appreciation to former Councilors Klett and Sones for their service.

Former Deputy Mayor Hall thanked the Mayor and the Council. She stated that she will treasure the chair, and compared the four legs of the chairs to the four parts that keep the Town running: the Town Manager, the Town Council, the Town staff and the Town citizens. She noted that if even one leg of the chair is removed the chair will not stand, similarly each of the four parts of the Town are of equal importance.

Former Councilor Hedberg thanked the Mayor, the Council and his family. He stated that while most his retirement will be spent with his wife and children he is not completely retired as he is still serving on a few boards and commissions. He stated that serving the Town has not been easy, but it has been a privilege and thanked all those who have helped him over the years.

Former Mayor Mortensen commented that it was a pleasure to serve with the previous Council. He noted that the present Council is carrying on the legacy of all of the previous Councils. He remarked that he misses the staff, noting that he often talked to the staff more than he talked to his family over the last two years. He thanked the Council on behalf of himself and others who could not attend.

The Council thanked and congratulated the former members. Councilor Cohen noted that the three of them were her teammates and buddies. She noted that Councilor Hedberg had some terrific ideas using his expertise in finance. She stated that serving with Mayor Mortensen the second time around was something very special, and that she and Deputy Mayor Hall worked very well together. Councilor Cohen also thanked former Councilors Klett and Sones. Councilor Bowen noted that Mayor Mortensen was an excellent leader who made many sacrifices in his hard work and dedication to the Town. He noted that it was fun to work with Councilor Hedberg, as he possessed a unique insight and his heart was always in serving the Town. Councilor Bowen remarked that he has served with Deputy Mayor Hall for the longest amount of time and he now understands how difficult it is to be in the minority party. He stated that she had great insight, and he appreciated her knowledge and dedication. He noted that Deputy Mayor Hall is now the Chair TPZ and that Councilor Hedberg now the Chair of the Board of Parks and Recreation, and commented that the Town is in good hands. Councilor Banach stated that it was a distinct and absolute pleasure to serve with the three members and thanked them for their service. Councilor Nagel commented that as a new member of the Council he now knows what they all have gone through, and he appreciates all of their efforts even more now than before he joined the Council. He wished them all well and expressed hope that they will all stay involved in the community. Councilor Boni remarked that he had the pleasure of knowing Deputy Mayor Hall for a long time, and that she is a great person. He remarked that Councilor Hedberg was on his basketball team as a child and that he grew up to be a fine gentleman. Councilor Boni stated that he has always considered Mayor Mortensen a great person and a great Mayor. He wished them all success. Councilor Bottalico thanked the members for their good work and expressed hope that they will all be back. Councilor Bowen also thanked former Councilors Klett and Sones, noting that Councilor Klett has served for many years on both the Board of Education and the Council and that Councilor Sones was very passionate about his work for the Town.

Mayor Wright read a note from former Councilor Sones, who was unable to attend the meeting:

Former Councilor Sones wrote: "It is important for me that I express my appreciation as well as my regrets for not being there with you all tonight. On the evening on the election, I mentioned to those to assembled that even though I was not successful in reelection I felt, at the time off loss a sense of victory, for in the two years of serving on the Town Council I was able to work with an exciting group of individuals on both sides of the aisle and a much admired Mayor. I met members of the community whom I otherwise would not have met or had the opportunity to meet. We accepted many challenges and opportunities and hopefully left Newington a better place than we started with. I extend my thanks for tonight's recognition and my appreciation to those who had the confidence in me to provide me with the honor and privilege to serve."

Councilor Nasinnyk spoke on behalf of herself and Councilors Banach and Sones who were all new members of the Council two years ago and thanked the former members for their kindness, help, support, insight and experience. She stated that she hopes that the new Council can make them proud.

Public comment – none.

Motion seconded by Councilor Cohen. Motion passed 9-0.

**IV PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL (none)**

**V CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS**

**A 8-24 Referral – Street Acceptance/Strawberry Lane**

Deputy Mayor Lenares moved the following:

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Newington Town Council hereby refers to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission for an 8-24 Report a petition for street acceptance of Strawberry Lane as a Town road.**

Motion seconded by Councilor Bottalico. Motion passed 9-0.

**B Marcus Communications Agreements**

Town Manager Salomone commented that the correction was made as noted last week, and also noted that one of the contacts will go to the Town Attorney rather than Attorney Monchien (the attorney who was involved in the negotiation.) Town Manager Salomone stated that the agreement otherwise remains intact.

Councilor Bottalico moved the following:

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Newington Town Council hereby authorizes John L. Salomone, Town Manager, to enter into a “First Amendment to Option & Land Lease Agreement” which amends the Option & Land Lease Agreement, dated July 5, 2001, between the Town of Newington and The Marcus Group, LLC; BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

**That the Town Manager, John L. Salomone, is hereby authorized to execute a “Spectrum Lease Agreement” between Marcus Spectrum Holding, LLC and the Town of Newington, Connecticut, in conjunction with the aforesaid agreement.**

Motion seconded by Councilor Cohen

Councilor Cohen thanked Town Manager Salomone for taking on the complicated negotiations and thanked all involved for turning an agreement that did not work in the Town's favor into one that is great for both sides. She also thanked Marcus Communications for doing what is best for the Town.

Mayor Wright commented that the new agreement will be a fantastic deal for both partners. He thanked Town Manager Salomone and the legal staff for a job well done. He stated that not only will the project provide frequencies and equipment to the Town it will also provide income to the Town. Mayor Wright noted that the agreement is both beneficial to the Town and an example of a great public/private partnership.

Motion passed 9-0

**C West Meadow Cemetery Project Design Services Contract**

Councilor Cohen moved the following:

**RESOLVED:**

**Pursuant to the recommendation of the West Meadow Cemetery Expansion Project Building Committee, the BSC Group, Glastonbury, CT is hereby selected to provide design services for the expansion of the West Meadow Cemetery, said services to be provided for a fee of \$29,500.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

**That the Town Manager, John L. Salomone, on behalf of the Town of Newington, is hereby authorized to negotiate an Agreement to employ the BSC Group to provide design services for this project.**

Motion seconded by Councilor Nasinnyk.

Councilor Nasinnyk reiterated the discussion from the last Council meeting, stating that the BSC Group is very enthusiastic and seems to be in favor of working with the Town. She stated that she looks forward to the Town having a good relationship with the BSC Group.

Motion passed 9-0.

D Set Date of Draft Report by Charter Revision Commission

Councilor Nagel moved the following:

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Charter Revision Commission shall submit its Draft Report to the Town Council no later than April 11, 2009 as required by State Statute.**

Motion seconded by Councilor Cohen. Motion passed 9-0.

**VI CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS**

A Inland Wetland Regulations

Town Manager Salomone stated that the Council has received a memo regarding the proposed Town of Newington Inland Wetland and Watercourse Regulations, dated December 4, 2007. He introduced Town Engineer Tony Ferraro, noting that his department is responsible for enforcement of all wetland regulations. Also present was Mr. Block, the Chair of the Conservation Commission.

Mr. Ferraro stated that there are two main reasons why the Conservation Commission amended the regulations:

1. To make the regulations consistent with the model regulations approved by the DEP in May 2006. By assuring that the regulations are consistent with the DEP they will be upheld in court should the need arise.
2. The Commission wanted to introduce some changes to the regulations, including:
  - o Standardized conditions which can be referred to by number when considering an application.
  - o Supplemental application fees: the local Conservation Commission has the opportunity to hire a consultant should an application require expert review on the part of the Town, and the Town does not have such an expert on staff. The consultant's fee will be charged to the developer rather than the Town.
  - o Other changes are minor in nature and involve changes to DEP definitions.

Deputy Mayor Lenares asked whether other Towns are adding paragraphs regarding the consultant fees into their regulations. Mr. Ferraro replied that a handful of other Towns did have those provisions in their regulations prior to the new model regulations, but since the introduction of the new model regulations most Towns will adopt similar regulations regarding the hiring of consultants. Mr. Block commented that the DEP has informed the Commission that in many instances the courts have viewed testimony of experts as being one-sided when the Town has no expert to refute their position. He stated that the DEP has recognized that in most cases the community cannot afford to have the particular expertise on hand in order to respond to any given application. Mr. Block stated that pioneering communities have come up with this rebuttal fee that is equivalent to what the applicant is paying its experts, which gives communities the opportunity to obtain expert opinion in support of their commissions' obligations to support the wetlands. Mr. Block also commented that by standardizing conditions they will become clearer to the applicant and easier for the Commission to invoke.

Town Manager Salomone remarked that the supplemental application fees would not be utilized on every application; it would likely be reserved for more complex applications or smaller applications with disputable facts. He stated that the Town Engineer routinely handles the bulk of the applications but on occasion when there is an item of dispute there will be the opportunity to seek a second opinion.

Councilor Bottalico asked whether it is possible that these fees could reach into the thousands of dollars. Mr. Ferraro replied that while it is not impossible, most of the time the fees will be much lower: about \$200.00 to \$500.00, perhaps occasionally up to \$1000.00.

Mr. Ferraro read from the regulations: "Any portion of the supplemental ... fee in excess of the actual cost may be refunded to the applicant after a final accounting..." He stated that the reason for the word "may" in the sentence is because the Conservation Commission on its own is not authorized to refund the money because once the money is received it goes into the general fund and only the Council can approve the refund.

Town Manager Salomone stated that the item will be on the agenda for consideration at the next Council meeting.

## B Financial Report – Mid Year Transfers

Town Manager Salomone reviewed the memo from Ann Harter, Director of Finance, which outlined the mid-year financial update. Town Manager Salomone remarked that per the Town Charter, transfers may not be made prior to January 1<sup>st</sup>.

Ms. Harter gave an overview of the report:

- Revenue: Revenues are estimated to be up approximately \$580,000 compared to the adopted level. The majority of the \$580,000 is a net increase. The Town received \$923,082 from the CRRA but experienced a reduction in State aid. The Town received about \$377,000 less than anticipated from the State.

Town Manager Salomone commented that the Town used the Governor's number in its budget, noting that the Governor's number is generally a conservative one which is often increased by the General Assembly. He stated that the net impact on the budget is still positive, but only to the effect of the Assembly's number budgeted at the State level.

Ms. Harter resumed her report:

- Tax Collections: to date they are on track, but given economic reports they will keep a close eye on collections.
- Other Revenues: trending as budgeted, but with a slowing economy special consideration will be given to those items.
- Expenditures: on target with budget for the first half of the year. Most variances are due to recruitment and legal costs involved with personnel changes during the first half of the year. Utilities are on track.
- Appropriation Transfers: two line items exist with a potential overdraft: Personnel and Sanitation line items. Money is available from the Finance and Engineering departments (due to vacancies) to transfer to the Personnel and Sanitation departments.

Town Manager Salomone noted that the vacancies have since been filled.

Councilor Bottalico asked about the collection rate percentage. Ms. Harter stated that January is still being collected, but they are at about 60% so far. She stated that last July they collected 99% of taxes due, a record. Councilor Bottalico inquired about the value of the uncollected 1%. Ms. Harter replied that it is about \$600,000.

Councilor Bowen congratulated Ms. Harter on filling the open position in her department and commented that the word "anticipate" should not appear in the report regarding surpluses in the Finance and Engineering departments. Ms. Harter replied that she certifies that the money is available for the transfer.

Mayor Wright summarized the reports, stating that the Town received about \$18,000 less than anticipated in State aid and received \$359,000 less than anticipated in education aid from the State. He noted that at the same time the Town received funds from the CRRA, so the Town is overall in better shape than anticipated despite receiving less State aid than expected.

Town Manager Salomone commented that the CRRA tipping fee estimate (the fee that the Town pays to bring refuse to the CRRA transfer station in Hartford) is not available, and that there has been some dispute over what the fee will be. He stated that the estimate should become available around the first week of February, but until then it is a hole in the budgetary process. Town Manager Salomone stated that the CRRA funds were not a part of the Town's current budget. Councilor Cohen asked whether the Town has any control over the CRRA tipping fee. Town Manager Salomone replied that the CRRA is appointed by a combination of the Governor and the State Legislature and while there is municipal representation in theory, it is not direct representation. Mayor Wright noted that the Town's contract with the CRRA expires on June 30, 2012. Town Manager Salomone added that once the contract expires the Town will no longer have a commitment to the CRRA and that will be open to other options if necessary. Deputy Mayor Lenares inquired about the current tipping fees and asked about the anticipated amount of the increase in fees. Town Manager Salomone replied that the current fee is \$60.00 per ton, and that he had heard rumors of significant increases, although the extent of the increases will not be known prior to next month. Ms. Harter stated that the current budget is for 12,500 tons, so every dollar the fee is increased will equal an additional \$12,500 cost to the Town. Councilor Bottalico asked whether the tipping fee increase will be known prior to the next budget process. Town Manager Salomone replied in the affirmative.

Councilor Bottalico asked whether Ms. Harter can foresee any changes occurring to the State aid deficit numbers in the report. Ms. Harter replied in the negative.

## C Proposed Council Rules of Procedure

Councilor Bottalico stated that the Rules Committee consisted of Councilors Boni, Bowen and himself, and they have come up with a few changes to the rules as outlined in the draft distributed to the Council.

Councilor Cohen clarified that in Section 5, (inclusion of items on the agenda) items may be added with a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, as based on the Freedom of Information Act. She noted that with all nine members of the Council present a two-thirds vote would equal six members voting to add the item, but if there should ever be a time in which only six members are present and voting, the two-thirds vote would only equal four votes to add the item. She stated that the Council rules require five votes, so even if two-thirds of the vote is mathematically less, there must be a minimum of five votes in order to add an item. Councilor Bottalico stated that Councilor Cohen is correct, and that this rule appears in the Charter.

Mayor Wright stated that the item will appear on the next agenda for consideration.

## VIII RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

### A Appointments of Other Boards and Commissions

Councilor Bottalico moved the following:

#### RESOLVED:

**That the Newington Town Council hereby makes the following appointments:**

#### 5. Conservation Commission

**7 members, 3 alternates, 4 year term**  
**Maximum from one party: 5**  
**Remaining members: 2 Dem., 2 Rep., 2 Unaf.**  
**Alternates: 2 Dem., 1 Rep.**

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
Joan Byer	136 West Hill Rd	R	IMMED. – 11/30/11	Vacant (R. Briggaman res. 11/30/07)

#### 9. Board of Ethics

**7 members, 2 alternates, 4 year term**  
**Party Max. (Reg. members): 2 Rep., 2 Dem.,**  
**3 Unaf.**

Remaining members: 2 Rep., 1 Unaf.  
 Alternates: 1 Dem., 1 Rep.

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
Chris Golec	21 River Camp Drive	U	IMMED.-11/30/08	Michael Pollack ( <i>de facto</i> 11-30-00)

11. Firehouse Expansion Project Building Committee

7 members  
 Party Max.: 5  
 Remaining members: 4 Dem., 2 Rep.

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
Bd. of Fire Comm. Rep: Kevin Ziegler	1437 Willard Ave	R	BOFC Term	Francis Callahan (BOF term exp. 11/13/07)

12. Greater Hartford Transit District

2 members, 4 year term  
 Party Max.: 2  
 Remaining members: 1 Rep.

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
David J. Nagel	1175 Willard Ave	R	IMMED.-6/30/09	Vacant (Donald Woods res. 8/28/06)

16. Zoning Board of Appeals

5 members, 3 alternates, 5 year term  
 Party Max.: 4  
 Remaining members: 2 Dem., 3 Rep.  
 Alternates: 1 Rep., 1 Dem.

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
Alternate: Monica Golec	21 River Camp Drive	R	IMMED.-11/30/10*	Ken Hutchinson ( <i>de facto</i> 11/30/07)

*\*Term ending dates changed to allow for the staggered terms prescribed by the ordinance.*

17. Affordable, Age-Restricted Housing Study Committee

5 members  
 Party Max.: 4  
 Remaining members: 2 Dem., 2 Rep.

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
Colleen Kornichuk	42 Broadview	D	No term end	Vacant (M. Camerota res. 11/26/07)

Motion seconded by Councilor Bowen.

Councilor Cohen remarked that while the appointee for the Affordable, Age, Restricted Housing Committee is a Democrat, it was a Republican appointment, and stated that someone should be keeping track of such appointments.

Motion passed 9-0.

## **VIII TAX REFUNDS**

Councilor Bowen moved the following:

### **RESOLVED:**

**That property tax refunds in the amount of \$2,189.71 are hereby approved in the individual amounts and for those named on the "Requests for Refund of an Overpayment of Taxes," certified by the Revenue Collector, a list of which is attached to this resolution.**

Motion seconded by Councilor Banach. Motion passed 9-0.

## **XI MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

A Regular Meeting, January 8, 2008

Councilor Cohen moved to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting, January 8, 2008.

Motion seconded by Councilor Bowen. Motion passed 9-0.

## **X WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER, OTHER TOWN AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS, OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS AND THE PUBLIC**

A Correspondence

1 Petition received January 7, 2008 regarding care of West Meadow Cemetery

Mayor Wright read the following petition, dated December 19, 2007:

"Mayor Wright and Newington Town Council Members:

This enclosed petition is signed by family and friends of loved ones buried at West Meadow Cemetery. It is done with regret. After previous letters and photos were sent to the last council members, little has been done to properly maintain this special place.

We claim no fault to the maintenance workers when they are available. In fact, they are very helpful and caring for our occasional needs. We find that the lack of personnel to maintain this cemetery properly is the problem. Some years ago this problem did not exist. The reason being, the town had a full time employee at West Meadow but was removed for some unknown reason.

Please, we ask once again to give some respect for our loved ones, for your help, and to restore this full time position."

The petition was signed by Joseph J. Kalasky and Richard Popillo and included sixty-five additional signatures.

Councilor Nasinnyk noted that the petition states that the Council has been notified of the problem, and asked the Town Manager if he was previously aware of any communication regarding the problem. She stated that she was not previously made aware of this problem. Town Manager Salomone replied that the particular petition was just received in January 2008, and the reference to prior communication may have referred to a previous Council. Town Manager Salomone stated that the petition is correct in stating that there is no longer full time maintenance employee at the cemetery, and that the Town is looking at various options, as it is a labor-intensive area. He stated that he does not know when the full-time employee was removed from the budget. Town Manager Salomone also mentioned that there is a maintenance fund (separate from the Town budget) which is funded by fees paid at the time of plot purchase, and stated that the fees will be discussed to see if they can be utilized towards maintenance. He stated that the topic will be covered during the budget process. He stated that any individual calls he had previously received on the subject have been referred to the Parks Department.

Councilor Bottalico stated that he had received a call prior to receiving the petition and upon touring the cemetery he found that the main complaint is with the flowers, balloons and decorations left at the site. He stated that the decorations are cleared out every two weeks, but that the families put them back. He asked whether the Town should make rules regarding what can be left on the site, but noted that it would be tough to

tell a grieving family not to leave any decorations. Town Manager Salomone replied that there will always be disputes about what is proper to bring into the cemetery, and that it is a delicate area.

Councilor Banach concurred with Councilor Nasinnyk that he cannot recollect receiving any letters, photos or petitions regarding the issue while serving on the previous Council. He stated that he does not believe that the comments regarding communication listed in the petition are in reference to the immediately preceding Council.

Councilor Boni noted that many towns have restrictions regarding cemetery decorations and how long the decorations may be displayed. He stated that his understanding is that it is a hindrance to keeping the grounds maintained. Councilor Boni stated that it is a delicate subject, but that if the decorations are going to hinder operations of the cemetery that the possibility of restrictions may need to be considered.

Councilor Cohen remarked that she toured the cemetery with the Cemetery Expansion Committee a while back, and noted that the cemetery looked beautiful at the time of the tour.

Councilor Bowen noted that according to Councilor Bottalico's comments, the Parks and Recs Department has stated that decorations are not interfering with maintenance with the cemetery. He stated that the Department has done a great job in maintaining the cemetery. He stated that he would have a hard time creating regulations about decorations, as what may be just an ornament or decoration to someone can be something very dear to someone else.

Mayor Wright asked Town Manager Salomone to communicate to the petitioners that the Town will look into the issue with the input of the Parks and Recs Department and cemetery personnel, and that information gathered will be considered during the budget process to see how the Town can help.

#### B Town Manager Reports

Councilor Bottalico stated that he is pleased with the December overtime numbers at the Police Department and asked whether that number can be maintained. Town Manager Salomone replied that the trend is good, and that they are moving rapidly to replace vacancies. Town Manager Salomone commented that he is cautiously optimistic that the positive trend will continue. He stated that the overtime number will be discussed during the budget process. Councilor Boni commented that while he is also encouraged by the overtime number in December, it means that the overtime total for the year would be in the \$800,000 range. Councilor Boni remarked that while this number is better than \$1,000,000 he would not be satisfied with a budget of \$800,000. Councilor Bowen stated that he will be interested in hearing the Chief's recommendations regarding staffing, as the plan to add two police officers was not only to save the Town money by reducing overtime but also to address concerns about the number of hours worked, productivity and morale. He stated that he has heard from the Chief that the current trend among officers is that they are not as willing to work overtime. Councilor Bowen commented that he would like to hear recommendations from the chief about continuing to reduce overtime while maintaining moral. Councilor Boni asked whether overtime is counted towards officers' retirements. Town Manager Salomone answered in the affirmative.

Town Manager Salomone remarked that staff will be trained on the new Town website, which is scheduled to be launched in the next two weeks. He stated that the new page will contain many new features, including photographs of Councilors. He stated that the new website will contain a constituent service module, **Q-Alert**, which will enable people to go online to make requests for service, and will centralize all of the requests.

#### C Council Liaison Reports

Councilor Cohen reported on her meetings with the following committees:

- Youth Adult Council – planning its annual Hoopla, the proceeds of which will benefit two or three graduating students. They are also working on their annual anti-bullying/drug abuse and tobacco abuse program as well as their Six Feet of Influence program.
- Joint Committee on Community Safety – is waiting to hear from the Council on how to proceed.

Councilor Bottalico reported on his meeting with the NVFD:

- He and Councilor Bowen met with NVFD members about the Pay Per Call program and its progress.

Councilor Nagel reported on his meetings with the following committees:

- Library Committee – the Committee has approved of a company to tear down the Foley house, buildings and trees on the property which was recently purchased by the Library. The demolition will be at no cost to the taxpayers.
- Joint Committee on Community Safety – attended the meeting along with Councilor Cohen.

Councilor Banach reported on his meeting with the Conservation Commission:

- Commission reviewed an application for the property near Stop and Shop; the Commission should be commended for their thoroughness and the seriousness in which it takes its charge.

Mayor Wright commended Susan Wright, his mother, on being named the Library Friend of the Year.

## **XI PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL (none)**

## **XII REMARKS BY COUNCILORS**

Councilor Bowen thanked the three remaining members of the public for remaining through the meeting, including the Lenares family and the representative from the Board of Education.

Councilor Bowen moved to add an Executive Session re: pending litigation to the agenda. Motion seconded by Councilor Cohen. Motion passed 9-0.

## **XIII EXECUTIVE SESSION, RE: PENDING LITIGATION**

Councilor Nasinnyk moved to go into Executive Session at 8:30pm. Motion seconded by Councilor Cohen. Motion passed 9-0. Topic covered was Pending Litigation. Present: all Councilors and Town Manager John Salomone.

Councilor Bowen moved to go out of Executive Session at 9:15pm. Motion seconded by Councilor Nasinnyk. Motion passed 9-0.

## **XIV ADJOURNMENT**

Councilor Bottalico moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:17pm. Motion seconded by Councilor Cohen. Motion passed 9-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mrs. Jaime Trevethan  
Clerk of the Council

